Session V – Large Lakes, Deltas, and Transboundary Partnerships: Fostering Science, Cooperation, and Sound Management
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Fishery Management of the World's Large Lakes: Commonalities, Contrasts, and Challenges

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Abstract

This paper examines the variability and complexity within which management of large lake ecosystems must function. Understanding this complexity serves to help identify common variables potentially useful for comparison among lakes. To set a context, a discussion is first provided of the ecological and sociocultural complexities of the environment within which fishery management must be performed. This environment is composed of ecological, economic, political, and sociocultural components. Variables within this environment can be used to illustrate how differences between, or similarities among, large lakes can be used to organize lakes into groups for comparative analysis. Examining similar lakes has the advantage of comparing common challenges and their solutions, while comparison of dissimilar lakes can be helpful in discovering the bounds of particular problems and the actions available to address such problems. As we organize to share information in conferences and symposiums, topics of mutual concern need to be identified, and then systems need to be determined from which to investigate and share information. These systems might be those that are most similar or the topic might suggest selecting systems for contrast. These comparisons should consider all aspects of the management environment – the best symposiums and conferences on fisheries include not only the elements of ecology and fishery dynamics but also the concurrent consideration of cultural aspects, governance, and economics. Each of these are inter-connected and shape the way in which management of the large lakes of the world are conducted.